

JISWISSED POLICEMAN FILES APPEAL

Officer Accused of Molesting Woman, Threatening Gresham Makes Protest

Eugene Van Houtte, a 31-year-old Alameda police officer, filed a protest with the Civil Service Board against his dismissal on the ground that he was not properly notified.

Van Houtte was dismissed on charges of misconduct growing out of a complaint of De Ward Gresham, son of DeWard Gresham, a prominent Alameda resident.

Gresham, 40, said he was threatened by Van Houtte when he went to a party at his home on Tuesday night.

Van Houtte's appeal was heard by the Civil Service Board on July 10. He was represented by Attorney Stanley Wood.

A Civil Service Board rule says that a police officer must be given 10 days to answer. Van Houtte did not receive written notice.

The policeman who was ordered to serve the notice was in his pocket several days before serving it.

Gresham said that after he put his hands up Van Houtte struck him below the right eye with the butt of his gun, breaking the skin of his cheek.

Van Houtte declared the officer began after Van Houtte and five other persons, whose names were not revealed, held a "drinking party" in a building that is part of Gresham's service station, adjacent to the restaurant.

The six persons drank about three-quarters of a gallon of gin between them, Chief Drew said he learned. He said witnesses said Van Houtte was not drunk, but had been drinking.

Van Houtte, at his home at 2447 Montana Street, said he had not been told of Carr's ultimatum and that he had no comment on the charges. He is 28, and has been a member of the police department since December 2, 1929.

Carr said that he demanded Van Houtte's resignation not only because of Gresham's story, but also because he was "annoyed by other incidents in which Van Houtte has been reported."

Van Houtte was a semi-professional baseball player before he joined the police force. He was married in June, 1927.

Dead cop hailed 50 years later

By WED. DEC 21 1984
STAFF WRITER
Hudson

ALAMEDA — Half a century after Alameda Police officer DeWard Burton Gresham was killed in an accident while en route to work, he was awarded a Medal of Valor and the Rob Davey Award.

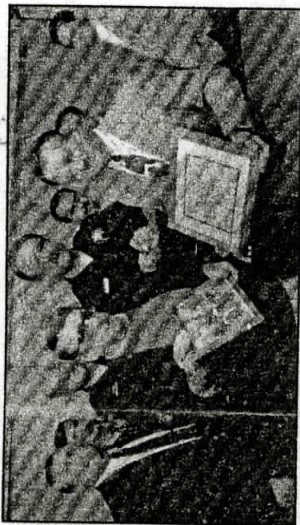
Gresham's son, DeWard B. Gresham Jr., accepted both items Tuesday on behalf of his father in a small ceremony at the Police Department.

The department also presented the officer's son with memorabilia depicting his father's formal swearing in and letter of appointment.

"It is very important that we remember our own," Chief Burry Matthews said while making the presentation. "Whether it is 40, 50 or 60 years ago, we should honor what they sacrificed for our city and the profession."

Gresham served on the force from Nov. 15, 1938 to July 10, 1942, Matthews said.

"The facts of the case," Matthews said, "are that at the intersection of Buena Vista and Union, a car pulled out and they collided. DeWard died at the Alameda Hospital



JIM STEVENS — Staff
DeWard Gresham Jr., the son of officer DeWard Burton Gresham Sr., accepts the Robert Davey Award and the Medal of Valor from police Chief Burry Matthews.

the next day." About 11 APD staff members joined Matthews at the ceremony.

Gresham's son was moved by the recognition, he said. "I got a bit teary-eyed last week when I got the call," said Gresham, now an Oakland resident. "He was only 32 at the time and my mother never remarried."

Gresham said he was 7 when his father died, but his dad's influence stayed with him over the years. "He loved automobiles, airplanes," said Gresham, who retired from the Naval Air Station. "These things left a lasting effect on me."

Gresham said his father was a great big guy who was good and impeccably honest.

Policeman in Attack Told To Quit Job

TRIB. OCT 6 1932

Resignation of Eugene Van Houtte, motorcycle officer in the Oakland Police Department and son of Police Inspector Peter Van Houtte, was demanded today by City Manager Ossian E. Carr.

Carr issued an ultimatum that Van Houtte either resign or be dismissed on the recommendation of Police Chief James T. Drew, who last night suspended the officer and charged him with misconduct, unnecessary violence on a citizen, conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, and neglect of duty.

Charges against Van Houtte were based in part on the report of DeWard B. Gresham, son of Dr. John L. Gresham, City Councilman, that Van Houtte threatened to shoot him and struck him with the butt of a gun after he came to the aid of a girl he said the officer was molesting.

Gresham declared that Van Houtte, on Monday, attempted to induce Miss Henrietta Anderson, waitress in a restaurant at Fifth Avenue and East Twelfth Street, to leave her post and go out with him. The girl was so frightened of the officer she broke into tears, according to the stories told by Chief Drew by Gresham and other witnesses.

After Gresham persuaded Van Houtte to leave the restaurant, Gresham declared, the officer forced him against the wall of a battery shop adjacent to the restaurant holding a gun against his body. In the ensuing scuffle, Van Houtte dropped and retrieved his gun, according to the report.

"Put your hands up. Don't think I won't shoot," Gresham quoted Van Houtte as saying to him.

Gresham said that after he put his hands up Van Houtte struck him below the right eye with the butt of the gun, breaking the skin of his cheek. He declared the attack began after Van Houtte and five other persons, whose names were not revealed, held a "drinking party" in a building that is part of Gresham's service station, adjacent to the restaurant.

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DOUSTED OFFICER GETS HEARING

TRIB. MAR 20 1932

Patrolman Eugene Van Houtte's pistol was unloaded when it was pointed at DeWard Gresham during the altercation which caused Van Houtte's dismissal from the police force, according to his testimony at the hearing of his appeal before the Civil Service Board last night.

Van Houtte testified that he unloaded his pistol before the drinking began "so that nobody could be hurt." The Civil Service Board took testimony from Van Houtte and others, and then ordered the case continued until April 7 for more testimony.

Van Houtte was dismissed from the police force after it was alleged that he had annoyed a restaurant waitress and had assaulted Gresham, son of Councilman John L. Gresham, after the latter had tried to protect the waitress. Testimony at last night's hearing declared that there was an informal party at the restaurant-service station where the conflict occurred, and that four persons imbibed three quarts of gin and had sent out for more.

Witnesses included City Manager Ossian E. Carr, Chief of Police James T. Drew, DeWard Gresham, William Fournier, and Mrs. Henrietta Anderson, the waitress. The witnesses were all for the prosecution. Van Houtte's witnesses will testify at the next session.

The Civil Service Board heard Van Houtte's appeal because it was compelled to do so under a writ of mandamus from the Superior Court.

Officer, Chasing Speeder, Hits Car; Badly Injured

ALAMEDA, March 2.—Patrolman DeWard B. Gresham, 31, was injured seriously last night when he crashed his motorcycle into an automobile while chasing a speeder at 50 miles an hour.

The officer suffered a fractured ankle, cuts and bruises, and was badly shaken up. He was held at Alameda Hospital for observation.

The accident happened as he chased a speeding motorist out Webster Street. He did not see Lloyd D. Case, 41, 4621 Wood Street, another driver, turning at Eagle Avenue.

The motorcycle struck the car broadside and was demolished. Gresham was thrown to the pavement beneath his crumpled vehicle. The speeder escaped.

Funeral Held for Alameda Officer

ALAMEDA, July 10.—An Alameda funeral was held today for a day in a critical condition, who died last night of injuries received when his motorcycle collided with his automobile while he was on his way to work.

Several hours after the accident, Patrolman DeWard B. Gresham, 31, of 411 Lincoln Street, was taken to the hospital, where he died of internal injuries.

Police reported that Gresham's motorcycle collided with an automobile driven by Thomas H. Rudd, 2258 Pacific street, in an accident occurred at Buena Vista Avenue and Union Street.

A Survivors include his father and mother, his widow, Helen Gresham, children, DeWard B. Gresham Jr., 7, and John Lee Gresham, seven weeks.

Gresham died Saturday at Alameda Hospital. His motorcycle crashed into a car driven by carpenter, H. Rudd, 70, a ship Buena Vista Friday morning on Union Street. Fellow officers said he was chasing a speeding car at the time. Rudd was not injured.

The services were held at the Fowler-Anderson Church, 2244 Santa Clara Avenue, Rev. Alasalom D. Faupell, pastor of the Humanist Fellowship, officiated.

IDENTICAL DEATHS TAKE MOTORCYCLIST, ARRESTING OFFICER

TRIB. JUL 11 1942
The Alameda police court called yesterday afternoon, "Myron Silverthorn."

No one answered and according to routine procedure, a card was written to be sent to the home address of young Silverthorn, 17, of 1005 Santa Clara Avenue.

Checking the records, Clerk F. E. Chalmers found that Silverthorn had died early yesterday morning from injuries received Monday in a motorcycle accident. Checking the name of the patrolman who had issued young Silverthorn a citation for speeding on July 2, in order to cancel the citation, Chalmers found the name of DeWard Gresham.

Gresham died Saturday after his motorcycle had hurtled him into the side of an automobile, in exactly the same type of accident which resulted in the death of young Silverthorn.

Police and Chalmers' return, Monday, found Gresham's funeral, Monday, happened on the scene of the accident at Webster Street and Alameda Avenue, in which Silverthorn was fatally injured.